NOVA SCOTIA Government of Nova Scotia

# Book Examines African-Nova Scotian Education

**Department of Education and Culture (to July 99)**
**November 30, 1998 15:10**

The work of several African-Nova Scotians received acknowledgement today, as Education and Culture Minister Robbie Harrison tabled a recently published book for the Legislative Library.

Mr. Harrison introduced Re/Visioning: Canadian Perspectives on the Education of Africans in the Late 20th Century to the House of Assembly. The book features the writings of several African-Nova Scotians and explores the contributions that African-Nova Scotians have made toward establishing a stronger voice in education.

"This book recognizes the contributions that African-Nova Scotians have made in African-Canadian education, and in making this book a reality," said Mr. Harrison. "Here in Nova Scotia, the Black Learners Advisory Committee made 46 recommendations to build equity in education for African-Nova Scotian learners, and action has been taken on every one."

A chapter is devoted to the 1994 BLAC Report on Education, prepared by Nova Scotia's Black Learners Advisory Committee, and the initiatives taken by the Department of Education and Culture to address past inequities in the system. Another chapter focuses on Dalhousie University's experience with access programs for African-Canadians.

"I am very proud of this publication and the leading role that the African-Nova Scotian community and the Department of Education and Culture are taking in African-Canadian education," said Robert Upshaw, the department's director of African-Canadian Services Division of the Department of Education and Culture.

During his statement in the House of Assembly, Mr. Harrison highlighted his department's continued commitment to work with members of the African-Nova Scotian community in promoting their rights and interests.

The initiatives being undertaken include: 16 supplementary education programs operating in various communities across the province, providing cultural and academic enrichment to 500 students; a preschool program with an Afrocentric curriculum operating in North Preston; 24 scholarships awarded to African-Nova Scotians who have been accepted into teacher-training institutions across the province; and the development of a new African heritage literature course for high school students.

The following African-Nova Scotian writers contributed articles to Re/visioning: Brad Barton, past-chair of Council on African-Canadian Education, past-president of National Council of Black Educators of Canada; George Elliot Clarke, poet, essayist

and first recipient of the Portia White Prize; Sean Flynn Foyn, magistral student in history at University of Ottawa; Patrick Kakembo, assistant director of African-Canadian Services Division, Department of Education and Culture; and Mr. Upshaw, director of the division.

The editorial committee included the following African-Nova Scotians: Agnes Calliste, St. Francis Xavier University; Wanda Thomas-Bernard, Dalhousie University; and the late Vanroy Tobitt, Mr. Upshaw and Mr. Kakembo, Department of Education and Culture.

The book's editors are Vincent D'Oyley and Carl E. James. Mr. D'Oyley was an external reviewer for the Black Learners Advisory Committee Report on Education, and he wrote the foreword to that report. Re/visioning is published by Captus Press.

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